

Can Religion Ever Be Separate from State?

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Modern states are present in many areas of social life. “Secularism” is a term meant to indicate ways in which the realm of religion can, should, or actually is separate from that of the state. For a generation, social scientists have debated what might be called the “secularization thesis”—that some societies or all of them are moving in a secularizing direction. But the range of activities and spheres of human affairs where the state is present make the very idea of secularizing far more difficult in reality than it may appear in theory or doctrine. In this talk, I will focus on education in select global settings to understand whether religion can ever be outside the state apparatus and how to understand the various forms that religion inside the state can take.